DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 023 866 VT 006 624

The City and the World of Work. A Critical Examination of Life in Los Angeles and Urban America in the Mid-Sixties. Proceedings of the Annual Research Conference (9th, Los Angeles, March 14-15, 1966).

California Univ., Los Angeles. Inst. of Industrial Relations.
Pub Date 67
Note-61p.
Available from-Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024 ($1.00).
EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC-$3.15
Descriptors-*City Problems, Conference Reports, *Employment, Job Applicants, Perception, *Socially Disadvantaged, Social Values, *Urban Areas, *Urban Environment, Visual Environment
Identifiers-*Annual Research Conference, California, Los Angeles

Conference papers examining recent trends affecting the development of urban life in America are presented. "How People Look at Cities Where They Live and Work," by Anselm L. Strauss, presents sample work and life styles and their effects on perceptions of cities. "Los Angeles as a Changing Community," by Fred E. Chase, discusses problems and characteristics of Los Angeles. "Los Angeles: the Enigma, the Paradox, the Challenge," by Peter A. Orleans, compares the social, spatial, and time orientations of Los Angeleans, and the characteristics of their city to other city dwellers and other cities. "Los Angeles and Watts: A Conflict in Work Values," by Stanley C. Plog, presents two illustrative case studies of socially deprived job applicants and six tips to employers of such persons. "The Use of Visual Cues in Understanding Communities and Formal Organizations," by William B. Wolf, presents a framework for use in utilizing visual cues such as pictures, signs, and objects in obtaining a better understanding of the impact of cities on individuals. (EM)

C.1

THE CITY AND THE WORLD OF WORK: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF LIFE IN LOS ANGELES AND URBAN AMERICA IN THE MID-SIXTIES

Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Research Conference

March 14-15, 1966

ED023866

VT006624

Institute of Industrial Relations • University of California, Los Angeles

Price: $1.00

ERIC

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE CITY AND THE WORLD OF WORK:

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF LIFE IN LOS ANGELES AND URBAN AMERICA IN THE MID-SIXTIES

At this conference recent trends affecting the development of urban life in America were examined, such as community problems in Los Angeles and Watts, people's attitudes and views of cities, the impact of current migration and settlement patterns on urban centers, and the city as a place to live and work.

(Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Research Conference, held at the Statler Hilton Hotel, Downtown Los Angeles, March 14-15, 1966.)

Presented by:

The Institute of Industrial Relations
in cooperation with
University Extension

University of California at Los Angeles

Published in 1967

Copies of this volume may be purchased,
at $1.00 each, from the Institute of
Industrial Relations, University of
California, Los Angeles, California 90024

CONTENTS

THE CITY AND THE WORLD OF WORK

OPENING REMARKS

Fred Massarik

Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen! To start things off I feel that we should begin with the latest information. I have here a geography book from the year 1690 that I think might help us to establish the broader context of our deliberations. I would like to read to you what Gordon Patrick's Geography Anatomized had to say about California some 270 years ago:

Part II - AMERICAN ISLANDS

1. California

> This island was formerly esteem'd a Peninsula, but now found to be intirely surrounded with Water. Its North Part was discovered by Sir Francis Drake, Anno 1577. and by him call'd New Albion, where erecting a Pillar, he fasten'd thereon the Arms of England. The Inland Parts thereof were afterwards search'd into, and being found to be only a dry, barren, cold Country, Europeans were discourage'd from sending Colonies to the same, so that it still remains in the Hands of the Natives and there being nothing remarkable related either to them or it, we shall proceed to,

2. New-found-Land [sic]

Well, things have changed a little since Gordon Patrick's days. Newfoundland has not quite reached the height of urbanization, but we, as residents of Los Angeles, find ourselves involved in a highly vital, roaring, ever expanding and exciting community. Of the predictions that were made, not only in Gordon Patrick's time but a century or so later, some others are rather interesting as well. I picked up a book written by De Warville, a French traveller who had journeyed to the United States shortly after the Revolution. He predicted that, because the country and the continent were

so big, eventually there would be many beautiful country houses scattered here and there, but certainly there would never be cities of the size of London or Paris!

We do know that these predictions have proved quite wrong; we have come to take the urban environment so much for granted that most of the time we are not specifically aware of what it really is and how it affects us. It seems appropriate therefore to take a closer look at this urban scene, to see what it means for our working lives and for the way we go about our activities day by day.

We may distinguish a number of viewpoints to explain the meaning of the city as a fact of life and as a concept. In one sense, because the city is so very much with us, because it envelops us much of the time, we come to experience it as nearly invisible--as something holding little personal significance for us.

Or else, we look at the city as a kind of statistical artifact. We study census reports, we review socio-economic analyses published by banks, we examine City Planning Commission population data, we look at any one of the many surveys that are constantly being prepared in our metropolis. In all this, the city is defined in numerical terms. Of course, these are relevant; we see employment patterns, migration, mobility, and many other significant data derived from these statistical sources. But again, we thereby may get a rather flat and sometimes unacceptably mechanical view. While I am certainly not arguing for the elimination of the important statistical data--in fact, I am very interested in working with such data in some of my own projects--I think some other dimensions of the city are also relevant.

Still another view of the city--and this is one that has some rather interesting historical significance--may be termed "the city as a villain." Particularly in the last century, the attitude prevailed that the city is a corrupting influence, something that will destroy the individual, something that is inherently bad. This position was very much in vogue, and in some respects it is still in vogue, because many people focus on oversimplified relationships that see a direct link, for instance, between urban congestion and delinquency, or between narcotics addiction and slums. Clearly, the phenomena are much more complex than this, and, indeed, the city is not necessarily either villain or hero, but perhaps contains some elements both for human destruction and for human growth.

Further, the city might be regarded as a symbol of values, and this is a view that, I think, requires more serious examination. The way in which we build our cities, the way in which we create our urban environment, is of itself a reflection of what we think is important and of the kind of needs we have as human beings. Of course, these values are not always created by conscious design, nor do they come about by an instantaneous process. In some respects we still live in the shadow of the values that were held by people some generations ago, by those who first began to build our metropolis. In this morning's paper, one of our colleagues at UCLA, Professor Leo Grebler, discussed the question of how utopian should we be in our views of tomorrow's cities. He noted that, after all, what will be present in our urban environment even by the year 2000 will continue to reflect in good measure patterns of building and land use of the 1960's. We are not likely to see a sudden eradication of all past and the immediate construction of a science-fiction kind of environment.

Whatever the viewpoint, we recognize in the city a force that exerts obvious and subtle influences on everything we do. It affects the way in which we work and the kind of work situations we create around us. It is shaped by us, but it shapes us as well. I remember what to me was a poignant and rather disastrous experience some years ago. After I got my Master's I decided that it was time for me to make a living. I got a job in a plant over on the east side, a plant that was very modern and had no windows. I well remember the impact of this kind of work environment. When I drove along Sunset Boulevard early in the morning the sun was hardly coming up; then I got into the "cave" and spent my day in what I considered a kind of hazardous, removed environment. If I wanted to see the sun I had to get a quick look at noon because by the time I left it was dark again. So I lived for at least a brief period of time what was to me a rather sunless, bleak existence. But this was me, and this was my particular response. Of course, other people responded in vastly different ways. They felt that this was an environment in which they could indeed be productive. But whatever the impact, it seems to me that it's time for us to examine with care why we shape these particular kinds of urban environment and their personal and social effects.

Today, then, we want to examine the city that is Los Angeles in terms of our daily experiences as well as in terms of statistical generalization. We want to note in some detail the urban forces that shape the broad contents of our lives and the forces that specifically influence our working environment.

HOW PEOPLE LOOK AT CITIES WHERE THEY LIVE AND WORK

Anselm L. Strauss

Fred Massarik's remarks remind me of an article I read five or six years ago about the great desert areas which border cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City. I thought then, "My God, by the time I get to San Francisco, where I am going now to live, it won't exist any more." The author's argument was that these cities don't really belong there, and when I told other people about this article, they said, "Well, L.A. doesn't belong there!"

I have taken as my job today to set a general framework for various views that you will hear during the next six or seven hours. Then you can make your own decisions as to the value of what each man said, as well as of what I have said. In other words, my assignment is not so much to discuss cities, but views of cities.

For the last few days, in talking with friends in Los Angeles, I have found myself interviewing them in preparation for this conference, asking them, "What is L.A.? What kind of a place is it?" They have given me some very interesting answers. For example, I've asked some, would they like to live in San Francisco, and one said, "No, I like the beach." Then I said, "Don't you ever get downtown in L.A.?" And he said, "What downtown?" Downtown is, of course, an eastern concept.

Before telling you of other views, I would like to ask you to take about ten seconds to think--and this will come in handy, I believe, later on--just ask yourself, "What do you think L.A. is?" Suppose somebody asks you, "What kind of a city is L.A.?" The first thing that comes to my

mind about these big cities we live in today is that they are so big that it is impossible to know them in their every nook and cranny. As a matter of fact, most of us know only certain parts of any city fairly well; they are huge, they are almost incomprehensible. You can't know all their parts, you can't know everything about them. Most of us know relatively little about a city the size of Los Angeles, or even San Francisco which is much smaller. If I ask people where they work and where they spend their weekends, they say in such and such a place. If I ask, "What about Watts, or what's happened in the Valley?" they may or may not know. Some people, of course, have never been to Watts. As someone said to me, "I sat there watching TV, and it might just as well have been in New York or London. I've never been there and I haven't been there since the riots."

One of the main points I want to impress on you in the next few minutes is that how people get to know a city depends essentially on two things: the kind of work they do, where it is; and the style of life they live. (The latter is a little more complex.) Suppose you wanted to know Los Angeles inside and out, physically, extensively, what kind of a job would you have to have? For example, if you were a schoolteacher you might get to know two areas of the city in fifteen years--you work, say, at two schools--and that would be it. So, I started to think this morning, what kind of a job would I have to have really to get to know all parts of L.A. I couldn't think of anything except, perhaps, a bill collector--and I am not even sure that would take me everywhere. I would like to invite you now to think of three separate life styles. I will tell you what each of these indicates and you can imagine a lot of other things in order to get the point I am driving at. Here is the first life style.

In Chicago there is a huge population of Poles who have been in the city since the 1880's. And if you try to see, as if under a microscope, what life is to a Pole, you will discover certain things about his style of life and the kind of work he does. He lives in a community which he calls his "parish," and you can be right in it and not know it's a parish, but think you are seeing only a bunch of city streets. But this is a real parish, and in the center of that parish is a church. Now, where does this man work? He works in a factory which essentially belongs to the Poles; the workmen there all come from this Polish community. It is as if people from the parish go out to their fields as they used to do in Poland; they work in the fields but come back at night. All the men of the parish go out to work in the factory; they work there and then come back at night. If you walk around in that small parish, you can see certain things. For example, you can see that three generations, at least, have been housed in that area, by the kinds of names, signs on bakery shops, and so on. You can see also that families live together in wooden houses, young people living underneath and the parents on top, or vice versa. In one parish where Negroes have been moving in during the last fifteen years, at one period Polish men stood guard with broken bottles as weapons at the parish boundaries underneath the railroad that went overhead. They guarded the entrances against Negores--they were not going to give up their land! That land is sacred! You get the imagery--a style of life flavored with a kind of peasant morality.

Now, let us look at another example. Take a man who just moved to Los Angeles, or any big city. Let us say he comes from Oklahoma City, or Des Moines, or some place like that. He really loves his life in a

smaller city, but then he gets a job in Los Angeles or Chicago. Now he has to decide where he is going to live. He is about twenty-five years old and has a corporation job of some kind, perhaps he is a lower junior executive. Where is he going to live now in this huge city? Our imaginary man--and there are thousands like him--decides, "I don't want to live downtown, and I don't want to live near Negroes, etc. I want a neighborhood just like the one where I've come from, that has green grass, and that's good for kids, and where there is fresh air." So, if you ride around in the outskirts of the big city you see people like him living there. He doesn't have to make much of a salary to buy his house; and he is 25 minutes away from work, or only 15 minutes. He grew up in a house, in a small city, so grass is very important to him. But he has his eye on the next suburb, with more expensive houses, where he will live when he earns more money. His wife never goes downtown. She is a small-city girl herself; she stays home and cares for the children. She and her husband are thinking of their kids getting into college, and themselves into the next suburb.

One more example. I went to Watts the other day and talked to one of the men who is involved in affairs there, and I asked, "What kind of place is Watts? What's been going on?" He started immediately to give me the city's picture, the way Watts' Negroes see the city. He said that Negroes want what they are accustomed to themselves. And he added, "They come here and they usually go to the east side or the southeast side, but they always want the west side." And I said, "Who lives on the west side?" Professionals, craftsmen, people of that kind live on the west side, people who either own houses or have some stable investment in the community.

Whereas the Chicago Pole has great continuity in his community, these Watts Negroes do not. For example, someone had asked this man for a job, and he said, "Where have you lived in the last three or four years?" The man did not know where he had lived. These men move around constantly. Even when they are married and have children they move--for financial and other reasons.

People's moves in the city are, in fact, fascinating. Some populations are quite stable, others are mobile. Where you live, how much you move, and where to, depends to a great extent in each city on the institutions you choose to use and the kind of experiences you wish to have. (I remember a statement once made by E.B. White in the New Yorker. He felt that if he made ten dollars less, or more, a week--or if he moved just a block or two away--he would live in a "different" New York.)

To sum up the last few minutes--my major point is that nobody can see a city true and clear. That is impossible! People see cities, and live in them, in terms of their images of them. With that as a frame of reference, I shall list very briefly some classic views of cities that you undoubtedly will hear expressed today.

One view of the city is that it is a dreadful place, as opposed to small towns or the countryside which are marvelously good places. The city destroys people, unlike the country where life can flourish. If you turn the equation inside-out, then the city is where civilization flourishes in contrast to the dull provinciality of country life. The city is where the bright lights are, and all the excitement. The city is also where people "can make it" in the career and social mobility sense. The city is the classical terrain of the Alger hero.

Another urban theme--on the negative side, again--is that the city is a terrible, impersonal place, where people are callous and indifferent, pursuing only their own interests. Or, the city is a place where people lose their purposes as they become disoriented and alienated from their social roots. The alienation theme, of course, is a popular one today.

Then there are several themes that play on the relations among social classes. The success theme, mentioned above, is one example. As depicted in so many novels, the climb upward--or downward--is from one class to another. Antagonism is a variant of the class theme. Segregation, flight from invasion, discrimination, these are all instances of antagonistic relations between classes. Nowadays the focus is on race, i.e., Negro-white relations, where previously ethnicity carried the connotations of class hostility.

I shall mention one last perspective of the city which is related to most of the foregoing themes. The city is a place where, characteristically, there is discontinuity of social relationships. People lose contact with their groups, or groups are destroyed or thinned out, and although they may continue to exist they have lost their traditional customs and "meanings." Variants of this theme are the neighborhoods which deteriorate and die, and the ethnic groups which lose their homogeneity, their members drifting away while those who remain suffer from a loss of identity.

These perspectives of cities are often expressed in mass media and in conversations whenever people talk about cities. You will hear more about some of them today; then you can ask yourself which views you find appropriate and which ones you do not believe are reasonable interpretations.

Fred E. Case

When a resident of Los Angeles speaks of his city, he usually limits himself to superlatives. Almost by rote he is likely to intone that "Los Angeles is the largest, fastest growing metropolitan complex in the United States, therefore in the world, and therefore in the universe." These statements are almost true because Los Angeles County is the most populous county in the United States with 1.5 million more residents than its closest rival, Cook County in Illinois.[1] Since 1943 its population has doubled; since 1960 it has added more residents than any of the more than three thousand counties in the United States; and between 1965 and 1975 population gains are expected to exceed those of any other county in California.

At this point the Los Angeles enthusiast holds the field--an apparent champion. But, a champion of what? Is growth the only yardstick by which to measure Los Angeles? Must we accept growth and change as our inevitable future? What happens if we stop growing? What if we do not change?

What is Los Angeles

Los Angeles is, and has been, many things to many persons. To the early Indian it was a "valley of smoke." To some of us, as Harry Carr has pointed out in his delightful book about Los Angeles, it is a "city of dreams, a major controversy, /a city of/ racketeers drawing unwary flies into our webs, boobs, cross-road Puritans, bawdy proprietors of a modern Sodom and Gomorrah--at once gold brick buyers and sellers."[2]

---

1. From data furnished by the Research Department of the Security First National Bank, Los Angeles, California.

2. Harry Carr, Los Angeles (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1935), pp. 3-4.

To others Los Angeles is "76 suburbs in search of a city," and to the less charitable it is a decaying adult Disneyland.

In more prosaic terms Los Angeles County covers more than four thousand square miles; it contains 76 cities within its boundaries, an estimated population of 6.9 million (in 1965), and more than two million homes. Los Angeles, the largest of these cities, covers approximately ten percent of the total County area and contains almost one-third of the County's population and homes.

However, Los Angeles is neither a city nor a county of averages, and these figures represent averages. Rather, it is a metropolitan area of extremes whose flavor is hidden by averages.[3] In Watts population densities range from 13,000 to 15,000 persons per square mile, 15 to 20 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, 22 percent of the housing is dilapidated or deteriorating, and homes average only $10,000 in value. Areas like Bel-Air have less than half of these population densities, unemployment is unknown, homes are immaculately kept, and their average values start at $50,000. Whereas the population in the basin area of Los Angeles City is either very rich or very poor, the homogeneous middle class lives primarily in the San Fernando Valley, the northern-most part of the County, or in Long Beach, the southern-most part. And Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove, as well as San Bernardino-Riverside-Ontario, the two fastest growing urban areas in the United States, owe their positions to the spill-over population from metropolitan Los Angeles.

Los Angeles is one of the few major cities in the nation that has managed to exist without a comprehensive master plan, yet its

---

3. Fred E. Case, Housing and Riots (Los Angeles: McCone Commission, 1965).

citizens are too busy to be much concerned about this. Forty years ago it took a workman in Los Angeles about 30 minutes to get to work by public transportation, bicycle, or on foot; today it takes him 30 minutes or more by travelling the freeways in a modern high-powered Detroit chariot. In fact, some families spend an entire weekend on the San Bernardino Freeway trying to get out of town.

In 1852 the citizens complained of the poor air in Los Angeles; so an effort was made "to collect from the streets, described as pitfalls of filth and mud during a rain, all the heads and remains of cattle and other dead animals, that they might be set on fire to be thoroughly consumed and the air purified."[4] Today citizens still complain of the poor air, but instead of burning animals we must now muffle and de-smog our modern mechanical monsters--and the air is not perceptibly purer.

But Angelenos have not been uninformed about the condition of their city. In 1950 the Haynes Foundation sponsored a study in which the authors concluded: "...at least twenty square miles in the central area of Los Angeles are largely blighted, undesirable for residential use in their present condition, and are a growing financial burden upon the rest of the community....Reclaiming these areas should be part of a long-term comprehensive housing and redevelopment program....This plan should be considered the beginning of a continuing program of a rejuvenation of the city. Since nearly all the blighted areas contain a substantial proportion of families who belong to minority groups, the redevelopment program

---

4. Irving Stone, Men To Match My Mountains (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1956) p. 166.

should include a fair and clearly stated policy regarding the rehousing of families removed from project areas."[5]

In 1960 only about two percent of the properties in Los Angeles City, on the average, were considered to be dilapidated or deteriorating. But there is good reason to believe that in spite of our tremendous building booms we are not replacing our properties as rapidly as they depreciate; the heart of Los Angeles County could indeed become a giant slum.[6] These possibilities were also ignored in the older, eastern cities at the heights of their growth, and today Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Newark, New York, or St. Louis, to name only a few, face almost impossible tasks of rebuilding their blighted areas.

Politics, economics, and riots have played a continuing role in the life of Los Angeles. In the early years of the city's history incensed residents drove Indians and Mexicans out of town and once hung nineteen Chinese outside their burning homes. Periodically in the nineteenth century prominent business and civic leaders formed vigilante committees and "took care" of overly bold ruffians who interfered with the city's social and commercial life. In the early 1850's a mayor of Los Angeles and his friends felt that a particular felon had not been dealt with properly; so he resigned from office and with the assistance of his friends hung the offender. He was promptly re-elected.[7] And it was not too many years ago that the mob's fury was vented on "zoot-suit" Mexicans living in Los Angeles.

---

5. Robert E. Alexander and Drayton S. Bryant, Rebuilding A City (Los Angeles: The Haynes Foundation, 1951) p. 1.

6. Based on assessed valuations of property improvements in Los Angeles City of between 4-5 billion dollars, or a market value of 16-20 billion dollars, annual depreciation would average 37-40 million dollars per year.

7. See Irving Stone, op. cit.

Although vigilantes are no longer popular, "fussin" and "feudin" instead of constructive debate and action have not vanished from city and county politics. Meanwhile the cost of maintaining government goes up, our property tax rates approach the confiscation level, our freeways become monumental parking lots, our homes burn and slide down the hills, and citizens and business leaders wonder if they can afford the kind of city they are getting.[8] Whatever Los Angeles may be, the city defies accurate definition.

What Does Los Angeles Want to be

Although we may not know what Los Angeles is, we do not lack for blueprints of what it ought to be. Since our city is often called the typical product of the automobile age, a model of what other cities will become, we should perhaps seek its identity by looking to the future.

Some would shape its future on patterns of the past. They prescribe a public rapid transit system as the solution to all the ills of the Los Angeles metropolis. Of course, we did have a reasonably rapid and extensive public transportation system about twenty years ago. Today, with about six times more people, we are told that all we need is the "backbone" of such a system. But since our spineless generation has shown a consistent preference for individualized automobile transportation, one wonders whether a backbone would suffice to support an entire metropolis. Certainly, the surgery needed to place this backbone into the urban body will be costly and may seriously injure some of the more delicate tissues and veins that keep the body well.

---

8. Tax bills in Los Angeles County now average annually two percent of the market value of properties; economists feel that anything above this is confiscatory and lowers property values.

Some argue that it is not a backbone but a network that we need. There are proposals for freeway networks that would crisscross the entire city at approximately four-mile intervals. Far from becoming a modern metropolis we would revert to patterns of the medieval, walled city. Boundaries would be redefined to match the walls of the freeway system, and in desperate rebellion against the rising costs and anonymity the richer enclaves may well be expected to set up guns and tariff gates at each opening of the freeway entering their jurisdiction. Undesirable "foreigners" would be kept out and those admitted would pay for the privilege.

If this looks like a somewhat exaggerated picture of the future, perhaps we should remind ourselves that the 1965 riot area was indeed ringed by freeway walls, and that the Mexican-American community in our city is also isolated by freeways which prevent its full assimilation. Instead of uniting the various communities into one vigorous city, the freeways thus contribute to its fractionation and to the isolation of its parts. On the other hand, there is good evidence that freeways--not a public rapid transit system--are the only means to keep an urban population mobile.

If some of the current proposals for redeveloping the Los Angeles metropolis had been used in designing European cities, we would see amazing results: the Tuileries Park in Paris would have been converted to a large complex of offices, convention centers, and government buildings; the tree-lined Champs Elysées would be a multi-tiered freeway; Hyde Park in London would have been developed for modern office buildings and a center for the performing arts; the ancient Roman forum would now be in the throes of urban redevelopment for public housing; and the Tivoli Amusement Park in Copenhagen would be a modern, sterile shopping center.

As we grope blindly, almost wildly, for the insights that will help us build a better city, we should pause and ask ourselves, "What do we mean by city?"[9] Less than one hundred years ago about 25 percent of our national population lived in cities, but in another ten to fifteen years perhaps 90 percent will be urbanized. In 1960 at least 85 percent of California residents lived in major metropolitan areas. And if I were to ask those of you who were born and raised in a city, "What is this place called a city," what would you answer? Some of you might say that you were born in a political unit called a city, some that a city is a place where people work in factories for wages. But does this identify a city?

The evidence indicates that few people have given any thought to what a city is, what it should be, or what it might become. Most of us think of a city such as Los Angeles almost exclusively in economic or business terms. Guided by such thinking private and public developers then erect industrial complexes in the midst of waterfront acreage which could provide invaluable recreation sites, or they build underoccupied apartment giants in charming old residential neighborhoods. Our mountains are scraped and shaped into overdeveloped eyesores.

But there are also examples of imaginative and effective combinations of industrial, commercial, and residential land use in Los Angeles, and because Los Angeles is still a young city we can shape it into what it should and can be. We need to give our city a leader or a voice, someone who will speak for it. Los Angeles can be designed to accomodate graciously many different working and living environments, and,

---

9. John Russell Passonneau, "The Emergence of City Form," in Urban Life and Form, Werner Z. Hirsch, Ed., (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 9-28.

as a result, it could perform more effectively its many different functions. But if we fail to find such a voice it may become a bottomless pit into which we have poured financial and human resources that become urban quagmires of despair. Let's take a look into the future to see what lies ahead.

Los Angeles in 1980

The year 1980 has a special fascination for forecasters: George Orwell's "big brother" is on his way to decide our ultimate fate. Certainly, some of us in Los Angeles already see big brother emerging from such organizations as the Urban Renewal Administration, the Southern California Association of Governments, or from proposals for various forms of a super-metropolitan government. Let's examine the potential for these developments and ask what is most likely to happen in 1980.

There is good reason to believe that the six major southern California counties will contain at least 16 million people by 1980, of which Los Angeles County will accommodate at least 9 or 10 million. The perimeters of metropolitan life will extend from San Luis Obispo to Sacramento, to Las Vegas, Phoenix, Tucson, San Diego, and back up the coast to Los Angeles.[10] The capacities of the counties to absorb populations will vary considerably. Ventura County will probably have reached only 25 percent of its capacity, while Los Angeles County will have been developed to at least 87 percent of its limit. Population densities will range from approximately 200 per square mile in Ventura and Riverside counties to almost 4,000 in Los Angeles County. In

---

10. Fred E. Case, The Impact of the Growth of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Region, ORRRC Study Report 21 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

accommodating this average population density many sections of Los Angeles City will contain 25,000 to 50,000 people per square mile.

The employment potential for 1980 is quite promising. The percentage of persons employed will remain high, but there will be a slow shift to service, finance, insurance, real estate, electronics, space, as well as research and development industries. The work week will be shorter for the typical employee as his job becomes more automated, so that a 20-or 30-hour work week, three-day weekends, six to eight weeks paid vacations or sabbaticals become more common. Along with the high level of employment, average annual family incomes can be expected to move from the current $8,000 to amounts between $13,000 and $16,000.

Climate and work opportunities will continue to provide strong attractions for persons from all over the United States. Among the in-migrants will be increasing numbers of nonwhite, socially and economically disadvantaged families, who may eventually represent 30 to 40 percent of the population in major urban centers such as Los Angeles, and 12 to 15 percent of the total population in the six southern California counties.

Of course, we will remain automobile oriented; based on present rates of motor vehicle registrations, the six southern counties in 1980 will have more cars registered than the total population count for all of California in 1950.

What Choices Does Los Angeles Face

Depending upon one's frame of mind, 1980 holds either great promise or bleak despair. One thing seems certain, however; if our past actions are any clue to our future, our future will be here before we are ready to cope with it. The very fact that we have waited until 1966 to discuss this future reduces our opportunities to achieve the changes we desire.

But let us review our choices, guided only incidentally by the past and avoiding an excessive optimism of the future. Perhaps our only certainty lies in the knowledge that if Los Angeles is anything, it is change.

What about our urban destiny? History would convince us that urbanization is, has been, and will be the destiny of mankind. On the other hand, the eminent anthropologist Margaret Mead believes that urbanization is not the proper goal of mankind. If we look at the forms urbanization has taken in cities of our eastern seaboard, then, perhaps, Dr. Mead is right. In the central parts of Los Angeles we already find some of that decay and blight so typical of Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, to name only the worst examples. How then shall we respond to the Lemming-like flow of the economically deprived, disadvantaged rural minorities? Is it possible to create an urban environment that will attract and maintain the type of single-family home and the low population density that now characterize Los Angeles?

What about mobility? High family incomes and short work weeks appear to offer unprecedented opportunities for physical mobility; but what about social and economic immobility? Suppose that advances in surface, air, and water travel would allow a family to have one home during

the short time in the week when the children are in school and the breadwinners at work, another at the beach or in the mountains for the long weekends, and a third somewhere on another continent for the longer vacations and sabbaticals. How many families will be able to achieve the kinds of economic mobility needed to have the three homes that the future promises? And does this mean that most of our urban facilities will become obsolete? What does a city need then except roads and airports for the leaving or returning transients? What about those social or economic barriers that deny our minority families the same mobility? How long will workers and management feel that they must remain in urban areas that are plagued by smog, inefficient local government, traffic congestion, and high taxes?

What about blight and deficits? Until 1900, less than fifty years after the closing of the frontier, our problems were essentially rural in nature. The luster of our cities was only slightly tarnished, but we did not worry because we still had new ones to build. We no longer need, nor can we afford, those new cities; our old ones are decaying too rapidly. How much longer can we ignore this decay? Is bankruptcy the ultimate fate of many cities because low property tax revenues and high costs of city services and facilities lead to mounting financial deficits?[11] Are we now proposing short-run solutions that will hopelessly complicate these problems in the Los Angeles of 1980?

What about community isolation? As we travel from north to south across the Los Angeles metropolis we pass through the jurisdictions of hundreds of city, county, state, and federal agencies, bureaus,

---

11. Fred E. Case, Property Taxes and Land Uses, Los Angeles County, 1960. (Los Angeles: UCLA Graduate School of Business Administration, Real Estate Research Program, 1965).

commissions, councils, and similar administrative bodies. How much longer can we afford merely to discuss the inefficiencies of our duplicating, amorphous governmental structures? If we delay attending to these problems at the local level, how long before "big brother" may become the only possible solution? Some experts feel that power is already shifting upward to those levels of government most able to deal with our extensive urban problems.[12]

What about economic and racial barriers? Will the central city become a repository for only the very rich or the very poor? Will it become the exclusive province for the current minorities, transforming them into isolated majorities? Or will economic and racial barriers disappear so that our homogeneous suburbs become universal? The question is how can we solve these problems, not if and when.

Change is necessary for urban growth, and no city is better conditioned to deal with it than Los Angeles. However, in adapting to change we must identify and strengthen the enduring urban functions of our city. We cannot afford to merely rectify past mistakes--we must act now to shape the future.

---

12. John C. Bollens and Henry J. Schmandt, The Metropolis. (New York: Harper Row and Company, 1965) pp. 584-586.

Peter A. Orleans

In the time I have available to me this morning, I would like to talk with you about Los Angeles -- the enigma, the paradox, and the challenge.

Los Angeles is one of the major metropolitan areas in a rapidly urbanizing country. One of the three largest cities in the United States, Los Angeles undergoes the most rapid and the most significant change. But once one gets beyond such epitaphs as "Smogville USA," "Southern California as 'A Way of Life,'" "Sewer District Suburbs," and "the Abode of Political Kooks and Religious Fanatics," there is much left to be said about Los Angeles, though one may have to look long and hard to find dissenting views. Such characterizations merely suggest that as a nation we are ambivalent about Los Angeles and what it has come to represent.

We are ambivalent, first because it is urban, and second because it is peculiar, because it is different. As a nation we have built a long and revered anti-urban tradition.[1] We have tended to look with antipathy upon the fruit born by the industrial revolution--the city. We have attacked the city because it has come to represent the massification of society with all its implications: standardization, conformity, impersonality, pathology, and the like. On the rare occasion when we have celebrated the freedom afforded by urban life, we have done so tentatively and with a sense of guilt. The urban ecologist Robert Park

---

1. Morton and Lucia White, The Intellectual Versus the City (Cambridge: Harvard University Press and the MIT Press, 1962).

probably spoke for the majority of Americans when he drew the analogy between the city's attraction for man and the candle's attraction for the moth.[2] The candle excites the moth and eventually entraps and destroys it. So, too, we believe the city excites and destroys man. And if there is any one city which promotes this imagery, it is Los Angeles--the secular city *par excellence*.[3]

According to one observer, Nicholas von Hoffman, Los Angeles is a city of illusion:

> ...anything may turn out to be anything else, and there is no way of knowing because /in Los Angeles/ nothing has a shape of its own....This is why Los Angeles has the best and the biggest signs in the world... without them the disorientation of Southern California Man would be absolute: he wouldn't have any way of knowing where he is or who he is. Most people on the planet know who they are. And, if by chance in doubt, a glance around them gives the answer....Not so the Los Angeleno. If he is in a thatched Tahitian hut he must ask himself, "Am I in the South Seas, Disneyland, or in a restaurant on LaCienega Boulevard?" Then he may discover he actually is in his chiropractor's waiting room or at the local supermarket's pineapple sale. [4]

A rather more perceptive, if ambivalent, assessment and commentary on Los Angeles is offered by Alison Lurie. The Angeleno, she tells us, has dispensed with time. Concepts like 'June' and 'November,' which elsewhere suggest two completely different ways of living, mean hardly anything in Los Angeles. The difference between the week and the weekend is taken less seriously. During the week Angelenos spend more time on the activities Easterners reserve for weekends, and they engage in these activities less self-consciously.

---

2. Robert Park, Human Communities: The City and Human Ecology (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1955).

3. Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965).

4. Nicholas von Hoffman, "Panorama" section, Chicago Daily News, September 18, 1965.

> There is another sort of time, [she writes] which is disregarded in Los Angeles to a degree that surprises the Easterner. This is the division between youth and age.... [And there is] the most important gap in the time dimension: the disregard of past and future. This is something that separates Los Angeles not only from the older cities of the East but from most of the rest of the country. It is not only that Los Angeles does not care as much about its past as Boston and Charleston. It does not care as much about its future as, say Austin or St. Louis. 5

In short, Los Angeles represents something new and different in urban history.[6] The burgeoning influx of population destroys any ties with the past, any sense of tradition, and the diversity of the in-migrants prohibits any systematic conception of the future. To the complexity of size is added the instability of the unrestrained and haphazard headlong rush into the future. So Los Angeles becomes incomprehensible, and we tend to write it off as an absurd nightmare from which we eventually will awaken.

But there are those who hold that Los Angeles, for better or for worse, is the wave of the future, and if we are willing to even entertain this notion, we cannot afford to dispense with it by appealing to a few trite and pleasurable clichès. Does Los Angeles represent the emerging city? Is it distinctive? Let's look at some comparative data and try to place this city in context with other cities spawned by our affluent technology.[7]

---

5. Alison Lurie, "Calendar" section, Los Angeles Times, February 27, 1966.

6. Wolf Schneider, Babylon is Everywhere: The City as Man's Fate (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963).

7. All data cited were obtained from U.S. Bureau of the Census, City and County Data Book: 1962, a Statistical Abstract Supplement (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1962, Tables 2 and 6). See tabulations of comparative data for the fifteen largest cities in the United States on pages 32-33 of this volume.

The hallmark of the contemporary situation in Southern California, indeed in the southwestern part of the United States, is its phenomenal growth. Of the central cities in the five largest metropolitan areas--New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Detroit--only the central city of Los Angeles showed a population gain in the decade from 1950 to 1960, an increase of 25.8 percent compared with population losses ranging from 1.4 percent to 9.7 percent in the other four areas. (This increase was exceeded in only two other central cities of the fifteen largest metropolitan areas in the United States, both located in the southwest; Dallas showed 56.4 percent and Houston 57.4 percent.)

Reckoning this growth in somewhat different terms, the Los Angeles Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) topped all of the fifteen largest metropolitan areas in population growth during the same decade with an increment of 54.4 percent. Houston and Dallas followed closely with increments of 54.1 percent and 45.7 percent, respectively; then Washington, D.C., with 36.7 percent and most of the other major SMSA's with increases between 20.0 and 25.0 percent.

But these figures can be deceptive, given the wide range of geographical extent of the major metropolitan areas in this country. Los Angeles is physically the largest of our cities with an area of 454.8 square miles; New York follows with 315.1, and Chicago is barely half the physical size of Los Angeles, 224.2 square miles.

The geographic extent of Los Angeles has made possible an extremely low population density. Of the 15 largest cities only Dallas and Houston, both of essentially the same generation and both geographically

extensive, have lower densities than Los Angeles. Los Angeles has 5,451 persons per square mile as compared with 24,697 in New York and 15,836 in Chicago. Dallas and Houston have densities of 2,428 and 2,860, respectively. None of the other fifteen largest cities have densities of less than 10,000.

Because of its geographic extent Los Angeles is both politically and ecologically distinctive. Here as elsewhere Caucasians seek to segregate themselves from nonwhites, but unlike the situation in other cities, Caucasians do not have to cross the political limits of Los Angeles; they can remain within the city itself and still keep their distance from nonwhites. As a result Los Angeles has the lowest proportion of nonwhite residents of the ten largest cities in the nation (with the exception of New York, unless Manhattan is taken to represent the politically distinctive central city of that sprawling metropolis). Moreover, the segregation of wealth and its deployment in politically distinct suburban communities is less advanced in Los Angeles than elsewhere.[8] Whereas 25.1 percent of the families in the central city of Los Angeles have incomes in excess of $10,000, in only two of the 15 largest cities (if Manhattan, again, is considered as the politically distinctive central city of New York) do as many as 20 percent of the families have such incomes. Also, the voluminous in-migration experienced by Los Angeles has not drastically altered this situation.

Due to the resulting massing of wealthy whites in the central city of Los Angeles, the Caucasian population holds, and has the prospect of holding for some time, the reigns of political power. If this situation

---

8. Morton Grodzins, "The Metropolitan Area as a Racial Problem," in American Race Relations Today, edited by Karl Raab (Doubleday Anchor Book A318).

becomes stabilized, and such appears to be the case, Los Angeles, unlike the major cities in the United States, will not have to contend with a nonwhite majority for some time.

By the same token Los Angeles has succeeded in avoiding the problems resulting from the separation of taxable wealth from the areas of greatest need. These problems force the cities of the East to face up to the need for metropolitan reintegration due to the functional and economic interdependence that characterizes metropolitan regions. But if Los Angeles has to some extent avoided the problems of fiscal equity that confront the cities of the East, it has in the bargain stymied the political efficacy of its poor and nonwhite communities. If the government of the city fails to take cognizance of the festering wounds in these communities, we may yet expect another Watts.

In short, the geopolitical structure of Los Angeles is distinctive in that it has unwittingly created a situation in which the city already faces the problems that other metropolitan areas have been able to postpone. While the cities of the East confront difficult problems of fiscal equity, Los Angeles faces the racial turmoil those cities might anticipate once they reintegrate.

Thus Los Angeles differs in important respects from its counterparts in the North and the East. The bulk of its population growth, and this is a relatively recent growth, has been rapid, phenomenally rapid. Having had substantially less invested in an archaic physical structure, this city of the automobile age also has been less restrained in its push toward the multicentered city form of the future. And, by virtue of the extent of its geopolitical boundaries, Los Angeles now anticipates the

problems other cities will face as they attempt to reunify themselves to correct the inequities and confusion wrought by suburbanization.

At present Los Angeles is distinctive in yet another sense: its skill structure as represented in the education and occupation of its residents separates it from other cities. However, trends now evident suggest that this difference may be short lived. Los Angeles is a white-collar town. Median educational attainment of its residents exceeds that of the populations in the fifteen largest cities in the United States. The median years of schooling in Los Angeles is 12.1. San Francisco and Washington, D.C. follow with 12.0 and 12.7, respectively, but New York and Chicago, with 10.0, are more representative. White-collar employment, which in Los Angeles City amounts to 50.3 percent of the total work force, follows a similar pattern. San Francisco exceeds Los Angeles with 52.4 percent, and Dallas, 50.3 percent, Washington, 50.0 percent, New York, 48.1 percent, and Houston, 47.0 percent, follow closely. But the more representative figure is roughly 40.0 percent for the fifteen largest cities.

The massing of the highly skilled population is a result of the preponderance of tertiary kinds of economic activities. However, in the last fifteen years manufacturing has also made great strides in Los Angeles, and the occupational structure of the city is rapidly coming to approximate that of other commercial-industrial complexes in the United States.

This, then, is the enigma of Los Angeles. Los Angeles is different, and because it is different we find it difficult to understand it within the traditions of our common urban heritage. But Los Angeles is more than an enigma--it is a paradox as well.

I submit to you that the paradox represented by Los Angeles is to be found in the fact that although we, as a nation, tend to see the worst of modern American life epitomized in the Los Angeles experience, this city, perhaps more than any other, has succeeded in providing the amenities desired by most men but assumed to be antithetical to an urban existence. The aggregation of private dreams, we say, has produced the public disaster.

But the public disaster is a disaster only if we wish to keep faith with the prior conception of what the city should be. To make the point let me return to Alison Lurie's consideration of Los Angeles from which I quoted to you earlier. She said in her concluding remarks:

> Mountains which have stood for thousands of years are sliced up into building lots like so much pound cake. New freeways are pasted across the city like strips of adhesive tape on a map. Hardly anyone tries to save the old buildings or to imagine what the place is going to look like in 10 or 15 years (if through the smog it will be visible at all). Only the present counts. It is this release from the various rules of time, around which the Easterner structures his life that accounts for the newcomers' sense of euphoria and freedom. 9

This is really only a part of the story. The release from the constraints of time, I submit, is merely indicative of a more general sense of release from a more pervasive set of constraints that persist in our culture. The disaster represented by Los Angeles is a disaster only if one accepts the implicit assumption that the structure of the city most common in our experience (that is to say the structure of the Eastern city developed at the turn of the century) is basic to the continued existence of urban life as we know and value it.

---

9. Lurie, op.cit.

Los Angeles, however, belies that assumption. It is the product of a conflict between the consumption demands of an affluent society and the concern for efficiency, economy, and order. That conflict has taken place under the ageis of a new technology, a technology which has destroyed the bounds of space and time. Affluent industrialization, in altering the space-time ratio, has given rise to a greater diversity of life styles within the urban environment. Los Angeles provides, perhaps, the clearest example of this fact, and there is no reason to assume that the rest of our society will not eventually come to resemble it.

The cost, that is to say the constraints, embodied in the technology and the plan of the older cities of the East are deemed by the Angeleno to be greater than the benefits. So he has evolved his own alternative. He has maximized individual initiative and desire, and collectively he has succeeded in creating a city in which he has control over his own corner of the maze and the freedom to travel the maze at will. The result has been the unplanned dispersion that is the characteristic stamp of Los Angeles.

> Public transit and the central city have lost their comparative position in the changing consumer market; by a process of trial and error, or natural selection, these structures have lost out in the struggle. 10

The ability of the "city of the Angels" to continue to attract and to hold newcomers, no less than the changing shape of urban America, attests to the partial success of that alternative. The challenge of Los Angeles is to make the alternative palatable, workable, and lasting.

---

10. Scott Greer, "Traffic Transportation and Problems of the Metropolis," in Contemporary Social Problems, edited by R.K. Merton and R.A. Nisbet (New York: Harcourt-Brace and World, Inc., 1961).

SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, BY CITY, FOR THE FIFTEEN CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1960*

	Rank	Land Area	Total Population	Pop'n Per Sq. Mi.	Increase or Decrease 1950 - 1960 City	SMSA	Residents in Same House	Migrants from Different County	Nonwhite Pop'n 1960	1950	Foreign Born	Native of Foreign or Mixed Parents
New York	1	315.1	7,781,984	24,697	-1.4	+11.9	58.1	10.7	14.7	9.8	20.0	28.6
Manhattan		22.0	1,698,281	77,195	-13.4		55.1	9.8	25.1	20.6	22.1	20.4
Chicago	2	224.2	3,550,404	15,836	-1.9	+20.1	46.6	6.1	23.6	14.1	12.3	23.6
Philadelphia	4	127.2	2,002,512	15,743	-3.3	+18.3	59.0	5.5	26.7	18.3	8.9	20.2
Detroit	5	139.6	1,670,144	11,964	-9.7	+24.7	55.4	5.2	29.2	16.4	12.1	20.1
Baltimore	6	79.0	939,024	11,886	-1.1	+22.9	53.7	7.6	35.0	23.8	4.2	10.6
Cleveland	8	81.2	9,876,050	10,789	-4.2	+22.6	47.6	9.0	28.9	16.3	11.0	19.9
Washington D.C.	9	61.4	763,956	12,442	-4.8	+36.7	39.3	16.2	54.8	35.4	5.1	7.5
St. Louis	10	61.0	750,026	12,296	-12.5	+19.8	45.0	9.3	28.8	18.0	3.5	10.6
Milwaukee	11	91.1	741,324	8,137	+16.3	+24.8	47.3	10.9	8.9	3.6	7.7	22.3
San Francisco	12	44.6	740,316	15,553	-4.5	+24.2	45.0	16.6	18.4	10.5	19.3	24.2
Boston	13	47.8	697,197	14,586	-13.0	+7.4	50.9	10.6	9.8	5.3	15.8	29.7
New Orleans	15	198.8	627,525	3,157	+10.0	+26.7	50.3	10.0	37.4	32.0	2.3	6.3
Los Angeles	3	454.8	2,479,015	5,451	+25.8	+54.4	38.7	15.8	16.8	10.7	12.6	20.0
Houston	7	328.1	938,219	2,860	+57.4	+54.1	41.9	16.3	23.2	21.1	2.6	7.1
Dallas	14	297.9	679,684	2,428	+56.4	+45.7	39.8	17.7	19.3	13.2	1.9	5.0

*SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census. County and City Data Book: 1962 (A Statistical Abstract Supplement). U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., 1962. Tables 2 and 6. For source notes and explanations see pp. xix-xxxvi.

SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, BY CITY, FOR THE FIFTEEN LARGEST CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1960*

	Median Age	Completing High School	Completing College	In White Collar Occ'ns.	Earning $3M or Less	Earning $10M or More	Median House Value	Median Gross Monthly Rent	In One Unit Structures	In Structures Built Before 1950	Using Public Transit	Autos per Housing Unit: One	Autos per Housing Unit: 2 or More
New York	35.1	37.4	8.2	48.1	15.2	18.5	17,000	73	13.3	12.8	61.0	38.3	4.1
Manhattan	37.6	42.4	6.0	48.1	22.1	19.3		70	1.4	8.6	64.2	18.2	1.5
Chicago	32.9	35.2	13.4	41.7	13.6	21.3	18,000	88	24.1	10.2	39.5	51.6	8.5
Philadelphia	33.4	30.7	5.1	40.8	17.1	14.2	8,700	65	73.6	11.1	41.2	48.1	7.9
Detroit	33.2	34.4	5.3	40.2	19.0	17.8	15,900	86	79.1	23.6	21.6	54.5	17.7
Baltimore	31.3	28.2	5.8	40.3	18.6	15.0	9,000	76	70.5	14.0	28.0	48.9	10.1
Cleveland	31.2	30.1	4.0	32.9	17 2	13.0	13,900	79	43.5	7.2	30.0	54.8	13.6
Washington DC	32.2	47.8	14.3	50.0	17.3	21.7	15,400	81	40.1	15.8	37.8	43.7	9.0
St. Louis	33.4	26.3	4.5	37.6	21.7	10.8	12,000	66	35.2	6.9	29.3	52.8	8.0
Milwaukee	30.4	39.7	5.9	40.1	11.4	16.7	15,100	87	42.9	21.3	28.4	60.2	11.6
San Francisco	37.3	51.0	11.1	52.4	13.5	22.6	17,300	73	35.5	8.4	36.8	46.8	11.1
Boston	32.9	44.6	7.6	43.8	16.7	13.6	13,500	78	16.4	5.4	40.0	45.5	6.8
New Orleans	30.2	33.3	7.7	44.1	27.8	12.9	16,000	60	49.5	17.4	36.7	47.6	12.2
Los Angeles	33.2	53.4	10.6	50.3	14.4	25.1	18,000	78	59.8	30.6	13.1	49.2	28.5
Houston	27.5	45.2	10.7	47.0	18.8	17.5	10,900	67	80.01	42.0	12.5	52.7	28.3
Dallas	29.3	48.9	10.4	50.3	18.9	18.9	11,300	72	75.6	40.7	15.6	52.0	29.8

*SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census. County and City Data Book: 1962 (A Statistical Abstract Supplement). U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., 1962. Tables 2 and 6. For source notes and explanations see pp. xix-xxxvi.

LOS ANGELES AND WATTS: A CONFLICT IN WORK VALUES

Stanley C. Plog

At the Urban Observatory at UCLA we are currently conducting a large-scale study on what happened in August, 1965, in Watts, and what are some of the structural changes in the community since that time. At present we have completed somewhere over two thousand in-depth intensive interviews, each interview running from an hour and a half to two hours. We have also completed several hundred informal interviews with persons in the community from a variety of different social and economic backgrounds. The problems we are studying are social problems, not just for Los Angeles but for the entire United States. These problems are also of continuing concern to leaders in business and industry today who are often equally unaware as to what to do about them. In my brief talk today, I hope to present some information that will be useful to those of you who must make decisions about hiring or not hiring persons from minority groups in poverty areas.

The persons we interviewed in our sample design are: 1) participants in the riots who were not arrested; 2) participants who were arrested; 3) a random sample of Negroes who reside in the curfew zone; 4) Negroes who live in the curfew zone but work with whites; 5) a stratified sample of whites in six suburban areas of Los Angeles; 6) whites who also live in the curfew zone; 7) persons who witnessed the critical incident that touched off the riots; and 8) members of "caretaker" agencies who provide supportive services to the community.

The statistical information we have been developing is not yet ready for final presentation at a conference like this, but I plan to do something a bit different today. I will present two case histories of individuals who live in south central Los Angeles, because their problems in some way highlight the kinds of problems represented by the larger community, and the kinds of problems that each of you is likely to face in attempting to employ persons from culturally deprived areas. These cases are not meant to be typical; they are illustrative and the identities of the individuals involved have been well protected.

Case #1 we will call John Jones. He is twenty-five years old, unemployed, and comes to you looking for work as an unskilled laborer. You obtain some information about him from the application forms which he completed and from an initial interview, but you decide on the basis of this to go into his background more thoroughly since he does not appear to be a good potential employee for your company. Upon further investigation you find out that John dropped out of school in the eighth grade when he was sixteen years old, and that he has achieved only the equivalent of a fifth-grade education. He was a poor student, was constantly truant, and all contacts with his family by school officials did not lead to any significant changes in his educational history. He has not been trained in any kind of specialized employment skills, and the longest job he has held was $3\frac{1}{2}$ months as a mechanic's helper and car washer. Though he left school at age sixteen, he has a total employment history of only $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. He has been in rather constant trouble with the law, including a series of narcotic violations

and arrests; he was picked up and convicted for small burglaries and pilfering when he was a teen-ager; and currently he is the subject of many "stop and search" situations by police in south central Los Angeles because he "looks" and "acts" delinquent. He wears a "slim-brim" hat (a conventional hat with a very narrow brim), tight pants, and an open-collar sport shirt; he has a jaunty walk and an idiomatic form of language which is abrasive to the police who often stop him. Usually he travels with a gang of males about his age, who have been in similar kinds of difficulties with the law, and who have had similar kinds of variable work histories. He drinks frequently and gets himself into trouble in this way quite often.

His problems did not start here, but rather in his family, the source of primary socialization and inculcation of dominant values for all individuals. He is one of five children, and only he and his younger brother have the same father. They migrated to Los Angeles from South Carolina when he was twelve with his mother and grandmother. Since that time there has been a series of men around the house providing the role of spouse in a pattern which has been referred to as "serial monogamy." His family has been on relief for some time and does not show a potential for outside income in the foreseeable future. John was married once, but only briefly; he has one child and is not currently supporting either his wife or his child. He has a new girl friend now, and it is not very likely that he will marry her. Does this kind of a pattern sound familiar to those of you who know about south central Los Angeles? Does it remind you of cases that you have come across in your own personnel departments? It should, because

sixty-eight percent of the children from south central Los Angeles come from broken homes according to the 1965 census data of the area that were just released. Would you hire John because of your social concerns and your interest and desire to do something for the disadvantaged groups of this community? If you did, you should be considered for "early retirement" from your job. The probabilities all point out that John would continue to be semi-delinquent, that he would be irresponsible in his work habits and, if he had a position which required some contact with the public, that he could give a bad name or a poor image to your company. As much as you might have strong social concerns, as much as you might be interested in doing something for disadvantaged people, the chances are slight that you could meet with much success in rehabilitating John through offering employment alone. In fact, his bad example in the company might endanger your chances of developing broader based community action programs which are supported by your company.

Now let us look at a different kind of person who also lives in south central Los Angeles. Case #2 we will call Mary Brown. She is twenty years old, and she is applying for a job as secretary with your organization. She has worked for two years previously as a clerk in the Department of Parks and Recreation for the City of Los Angeles, and she comes with extremely high recommendations from that Department. She types fifty words a minute, which is not much, but you are hopeful that she could improve her speed which is probably at the level of most clerk-typists you are hiring. She is very shy, but also a very

attractive and pretty girl. She is dressed modestly but appropriately when she appears for her job interview. She is very eager to work and it appears that she would be quite honest. If she were hired she would be very dedicated to your company, but because of your experience in interviewing John you are now a bit more cautious about your applicants and you want a little more background information on her. Your further investigations indicate that she grew up in a stable home, that she has one older brother, and that her parents are also from the South. In this case they are from Georgia and they migrated to Los Angeles at a time before she was born. Her father has a sixth-grade education and has been employed as a janitor by the Los Angeles City Schools for twenty-two years. Her mother has completed the seventh grade and has consistently worked as a domestic in various areas throughout Los Angeles. Her parents have scrimped and saved and now own their home in Watts, mortgage free; they have built a small rental unit in the back of their lot. Mary did well in school and received excellent grades, especially in areas of personal conduct. If, in your investigations, you have the opportunity to go into her home, you will find a strongly knit family of dedicated Christians. There is a picture of Christ on the mantle and there are little plaques throughout the home with religious quotations relating to personal conduct. The family attends church regularly and, in general, shows all of the signs of healthy upward social mobility--Mary's education is beyond that of her parents and her skill levels and her job qualifications are also beyond those of her parents.

Would you hire her? I would say, in most cases you probably would. But once having given her employment, you come across some problems that you had not expected or anticipated on the basis of her reference checks and your personal interview. You find that Mary is extremely nervous because this is her first job in which she is working primarily with whites. She feels "on trial" now because her parents long ago indoctrinated her into believing that she must demonstrate her abilities in the world of the whites. She is quite nervous about this and her initial anxiety causes her to make many mistakes--mistakes which require more supervisory time from you and which require that almost everything she does be reviewed before it leaves the company. She is not good at spelling because her classes in south central Los Angeles were not as competitive as those in other schools in surrounding suburbs. Her vocabulary is somewhat more limited than it should be because her family did not have an extensive education and therefore could provide only limited basic education at home. You find that even though she has completed high school she does not know how to set up business letters, nor does she know how to keep up files properly. Dictation and shorthand experience are not required of her, but even the dictation machines throw her because she has no previous experience with them. You also find that she does not know how to use an electric typewriter since she was trained on a manual, and it is going to take a while for her to get used to the new equipment. In general, all kinds of electric machines and modern gadgets throw her, and it will take some time until she is properly settled down in her new position. Very

adequately, Mary demonstrates the fact that even with favorable references, a good work history, and a high rating in a personal interview, applicants from disadvantaged areas can present unpredictable kinds of employment problems. Mary will take more break-in time, more supervisory time, and may even require some additional skill training before she is a competent worker.

But how could these kinds of problems develop in a city like Los Angeles? What are the conditions of Watts that will lead to more Johns and Marys? What is Watts like?

When we talk about Watts we are talking about approximately 120,000 people. But Watts has become a synonym for all of south central Los Angeles, an area approximately 124 blocks long and 44 blocks wide, containing some 600,000 people three-fourths of whom are Negro and the remainder divided almost equally between Mexican-Americans and Anglo-whites. In all, the total land area is larger than Manhattan Island. The Los Angeles City School System, which serves the area, tries very hard to do a good job, but the schools are not as competitive as others in suburban communities. A large proportion of boys drop out of school by the eighth grade, and they are often given forced promotions until that time. There have been good teachers who have tried, but through discouragement and through fear of their own personal beings many eventually leave. It is the policy of the City Board of Education to rotate all school principals into the area who are being considered for higher positions in the city school system, but even competent principals cannot attract all of the qualified teachers they would need. Many

homes are quite barren by middle-class standards. They are empty of books and magazines, a radio constantly blares on "rock and roll stations," or the television set is left on throughout the day. The poor-quality furniture is often constantly being paid for on time, and sudden repossession by merchants for default in payment is not uncommon. The economic problems of the area were pointed out to you by Dr. Case; they include the 15 percent unemployment rate that he talked about, and a family income of slightly over $5,000 representing an 8 percent decline in average family income for the area since the 1960 census estimate. This trend runs counter to the average 13 percent increase in income throughout all of Los Angeles during the period of 1960 to 1965. The area is also afflicted, as is the rest of Los Angeles, with a poor public transportation system. There is a greater need for public transportation, however, since there is a larger percentage of low income families in south central Los Angeles many of whom cannot afford automobiles. Paul Bullock of the Institute of Industrial Relations at UCLA completed a study on hard-core unemployment problems in the area, and one of his interesting side studies consisted of an individual who lived in Watts and pretended to work at the Douglas Aircraft factory in Santa Monica. This individual was to report to work at 7:30 in the morning. He took a bus at 5:30 a.m. and arrived at work 2 hours and 5 minutes later--that is, he was 5 minutes late for his "work."

South central Los Angeles is also a poor business area right now, because most business men we have talked to whose stores were destroyed or damaged during the August riots are not planning to reinvest. Those who have returned have small capital investments, such as in

pawn shops, second-hand furniture stores, and liquor-delicatessen stores. Most grocery stores are neighborhood "Mom and Pop" establishments, the kind of store that you and I are familiar with from rural midwestern areas with the screen doors and "Seven-Up" signs across the doors. People who shop at these stores pay high prices, primarily because they do not have public or private transportation to go to the more competitive supermarkets. The businesses which remain in the area are far too often dull and drab in appearance--cheap clothing stores, beauty salons, and a variety of other, service-type establishments.

Thus, many social and cultural forces tend to isolate the community: poor education, low work skills, recent in-migration from the South, family instability, lack of contact with the white community, economic and social deprivation, poor public transportation, expensive credit coupled with quick repossession of goods, and low social mobility.

But not everything is as bad as it might appear; this is not Harlem or south-side Chicago. Population density is low in south central Los Angeles, and the area is characterized by single-family homes, 35 percent of which are individually owned. There are many attractive streets; some have competitive campaigns at Christmas for the most appropriate and attractive street decorations. There are also a few modern shopping areas, and a variety of wholesale and clothing manufacturing concerns provide the lowest prices in town for durable goods.

In concluding--I know that many of you have questions about what you can do if persons from socially deprived areas come to you seeking employment--I have a few suggestions that I'd like to pass on to you.

First, you should use an appropriate screening program. You want the best of the talent that is available from south central Los Angeles, and you want more than one person to choose from. If you do not do this you will end up with someone in your corporation who will disappoint you, frustrate you because of the time required for supervision, and such problems may ultimately endanger your entire program established to aid socially deprived areas.

Second, look into the transportation problems for this individual. Will he have difficulty in getting to your place of employment? If he does, he is likely to give up easily, even though it may have been possible to work out a system of rides for him with other persons already in your employment.

Third, make certain that this person is well introduced to the senior employees, and that he feels at home and accepted by others. He is likely to have many fears and anxieties about joining a company like yours, especially if this is his first regular employment in a dominantly white company.

Fourth, you will have to plan for more supervision and help for this person, supervisory time which you can consider as your donation to society--your donation for the many debts that we all have to make this a better world in which to live. You may even have to provide a company training program if you hire several persons with similar deficiencies, but in the end you will probably have a very loyal employee who will stick with your company through the kinds of difficulties when others might leave.

Fifth, provide very immediate rewards for this person. These rewards are of several kinds: there are the verbal rewards indicating to the individual that he is doing well, that you are satisfied and happy with his work, and that you hope he is enjoying his position with your company. But there is something else that is very important and often runs against the company's structure; it may be necessary, for the first three or four months of employment, to provide paychecks on a weekly basis. A person coming from a poverty environment or a poverty background often cannot live for the full month of employment until he receives his first check, and he will take a lesser paying job or a job with a smaller future because he is given his money on a daily or weekly basis. The immediate money allows him to meet his immediate expenses, whatever they may be. After the initial period of three or four months, you can probably gradually revert to payment every two weeks or once a month.

And finally, above all, have patience because this individual may need some time to settle down. He may need more supervision and training, and he may need a lot more of your time than others in the company. In the end, however, I think you may discover some employment practices and procedures that are very worthwhile.

THE USE OF VISUAL CUES IN UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITIES AND FORMAL ORGANIZATIONS

William B. Wolf

The purpose of this paper is to present a framework for the use of visual cues as an approach to the understanding of formal organizations and communities.[1] At the outset it must be emphasized that this is not the only approach, nor is it suggested that what follows be used in isolation. However, it is suggested that many people are so blinded by their biases, or so limited in their backgrounds, that they fail to recognize what they see. Moreover, they often find it difficult to understand what they see because they lack a systematic way of organizing their observations and relating them to other data or to knowledge they already possess. Thus the purpose of this paper is to stimulate a way of thinking about formal organizations in our community.

General Concepts

There are several simple, but fundamental concepts which underlie the material presented here. They can be summarized as follows:

---

1. Since the conference at which this paper was presented was concerned with the CITY rather than with formal organizations, it may help to avoid misunderstandings by defining and differentiating the two concepts. As used here, a formal organization is a consciously planned social system of two or more persons, having an identifiable membership, a program of activities, and some continuity in time.

   In contrast to formal organizations, a community such as a city is identified primarily in terms of geographic boundaries. It does not have a formal program of activities, the membership is loosely defined, and within it one does not find organizational procedure in the usual sense.

   Communities are usually more amorphous than formal organizations; thus the focus in this paper is on formal organizations rather than communities. Much of what is said can be applied to larger communities such as cities, but for the purpose of exposition it is easier to deal with simpler systems.

1. Assumption of Causality (Determinism):

It is assumed that all observable data are caused and have meaning in the sense that their causality can be explained. However, an understanding of causality requires sufficient knowledge of both the past and present contexts.

2. Assumption of Gestalt (the Parts versus the Whole):

An organization or a community, of necessity, must be viewed as a functioning entity. It may be interesting to study its parts in isolation, but in order to really understand a specific organization it must be seen in terms of the dynamic interrelationship of its parts to each other and to it as a whole--a gestalt. However, the complexity of organizations makes it difficult to comprehend the gestalt all at once. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the parts and then consciously relate these parts to each other and to the whole.

3. Assumption of Differentiation of Formal Organizations:

While all formal organizations have some features in common, e.g. communication networks, memberships, status symbols, each organization is in a sense unique. If it has any claim to continuity in time, it develops its own distinctive character which differentiates it from other organizations in terms of such relevant variables as behavior and composition of membership, the determinants of status, the competencies of the organization, the most efficacious styles of leadership, etc. It is thus essential to understand both the common and the unique aspects of formal organizations.

For example, the distinctive aspect of an organization such as a business firm includes selection of members, indoctrination procedures, training methods, rules and policies, and leadership style. As

Philip Selznick points out, once an organization becomes an institution (i.e., has existed for a long period of time so that it has created its own value system, myth, and mores), the leadership must have institutional self-awareness. He maintains that "the more fully developed an organization's social structure, the more will the organization become valued for itself, not as a tool but as an institutional fulfillment of group integrity and inspiration."[2] Selznick goes on to develop the theme that institutional leadership "is the exercise of coercive force in the direction of institutional security."[3]

From the point of view of this paper the important implications derived from an awareness of the differential aspect of organizations is that one should use a diagnostic approach to any specific organization. To manage or function effectively in an organization, it is necessary to differentiate it from other organizations. This implies that we must develop a methodology for such differentiation.

In summary, the essential assumptions underlying the material presented here are:

1. There is causality, i.e., we can explain what we observe.
2. Everything is interrelated--we must constantly seek the whole even though we observe the parts.
3. The study of formal organizations involves the development of a methodology for differentiating among such organizations.

---

2. Philip Selznick, Leadership in Administration (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson, 1957), p. 16.

3. Ibid., p. 154.

Diagnosis of Formal Organizations

In this paper we are interested in the use of visual cues, such as objects, tools, signs, etc., to understand formal organizations and communities. The procedure suggested builds upon the basic assumptions listed above. It is recommended that each scene or sequence of visual stimuli be carefully analyzed for implications as to the gestalt. In this phase of the diagnostic process the observer develops a sensitivity for consciously understanding what he sees, a skill which depends on practice and coaching. In essence it requires developing the capacity to recognize and relate what is observed.[4]

With respect to such observations it is important to keep in mind the context in which data are observed. Formal organizations are dynamic and exist in a "running stream" of events. To understand a specific organization it is necessary to approximate "the flow," i.e., to relate the past to the present.

The procedure recommended may be identified as "think, talk, learn." The observer verbally describes to himself all of the details of the visual stimuli he is observing. For example, if he sees a picture of a man sitting at a desk, he would carry on with himself a dialogue which might run as follows: I see a man at a desk. The man is dressed in a brown suit, white shirt, and dark tie. The man is well groomed and wears a wedding ring. He wears a masonic pin in his lapel. He has a half-full packet of cigarettes on his desk. It is 10:00 a.m. and there are already six cigarette butts in his ash tray. He has small callouses on his first and second fingers. He wears reading glasses. His desk is neat. He has

---

4. It must be emphasized that this paper deals primarily with the use of visual, i.e., nonverbal, stimuli. In actual practice the differentiation of formal organizations involves gathering of data by additional means, such as interviews, observing committee meetings, etc.

a picture of two girls and a woman on his desk. He smiles readily and makes a pleasant appearance, etc. By first consciously noting every detail, the observer then begins to develop some understanding of the individual and the work situation.

In this procedure the emphasis is first upon developing sensitivity to the variety of stimuli that are visible to the perceptive observer; the emphasis is second upon the interrelationship of the inferences derived from the observed data. This is much more difficult as it involves general knowledge. For example, the flow of work in an organization tends to be a causal factor in developing cliques, animosities, and subgroups. Unless an observer has knowledge about work flow and its implications, he will be unable to understand the significance of his data. Thus, where a trained person observes a technical flow of work requiring low status workers to initiate orders for higher status personnel, he will tentatively infer friction between these people. Similarly, where the arrangement of work is such that certain individuals are isolated, the trained observer will note this and tentatively infer that this isolation extends to other aspects of the relationship of these individuals.

With respect to the development and use of knowledge, it should be emphasized that we have a great deal of knowledge, but unfortunately much of it is not readily available for use in the manner which I am suggesting. Furthermore, what is known seldom allows one to do more than draw tentative inferences about reality. The inferences are no more than hypotheses, and before they are accepted as representing reality they need to be reinforced by inferences drawn from other data. Only where constellations of reinforcing inferences develop can we assume that we really have anything close to reality. For example, if we noted that two

men are responsible for work in departments that are interdependent, we could infer that they need to work closely with each other. If the environment in their organization is punishing and goal oriented we might infer friction between these men. If we observed defective materials in one of the departments, we might further infer that all isn't running smoothly. If we noted that these two men seldom sat near each other in the executive dining room or in conferences, etc., we would then have reinforcing data which substantiate the more general finding that where there are interdependent departments, the frictions related to the flow of work frequently becomes personalized between the supervisors of those departments.[5]

To illustrate this approach to formal organizations, we can draw examples from similar places of business--namely two savings and loan associations. The advantage of this comparison centers upon the fact that the savings and loan industry is carefully regulated. Different savings and loan associations do essentially the same work: they make loans, handle escrows, collect savings deposits, etc. Thus they are essentially alike in terms of what they do. However, a comparison of two organizations in that industry illustrates that they are quite different--it supports the old saying, "It isn't what you do, it's the way that you do it."

Unfortunately, the full impact of such a comparison can not be gained without the use of color slides. Hence the following discussion focuses more on methodology than on actual analysis of the two organizations.

---

5. Of course, this is an oversimplification. There is always the personal equation at work, and certain parties in a conflict setting do, by trading on personality and friendship, avoid open conflict. However, a casual review of the relationship of professors of economics to their counterparts in schools of business on numerous university campuses will support the assumption that job jurisdictions do influence interpersonal relations.

We will start by observing the outside of the organizations and discuss visual cues found in the general neighborhood.

The first savings and loan association, S & L-I, is located near a major freeway in an area featuring one of the larger cut-rate grocery markets, a discount store, and an assortment of small business establishments--gas stations, a pancake house, etc. The pictures of the parking lot of the grocery market as well as that of S & L-I show a preponderance of older cars, mainly Fords and Chevrolets. S & L-II is located in Laguna Beach, California, a resort town settled mostly by retired people.

From pictures of these two different neighborhoods, we can draw tentative inferences about the associations' customers, transportation problems, sources of labor supply, and methods of attracting business. For S&L-I we could infer that it is located in a middle-class business district, that it can or should be able to build upon the business drawn to its area by "price" oriented stores and the freeway, and that its labor supply could probably be easily recruited from the nearby residential areas (e.g. wives who need to supplant their husbands' earnings). S & L-II, on the other hand, caters to a mixed but predominantly upper-class clientele. It cannot rely on nearby stores and the freeways to attract customers. Its location in a relatively small town would suggest that business must be carried on in a "personalized" way.

After viewing the neighborhoods, we look at the physical structures of the two organizations. We note factors such as the general design of the building, age, "image" portrayed, probable cost, signs, bulletin boards, landscape design, etc. The building housing S & L-I

is modern and efficient. It has two stories, is rectangularly shaped, and consists of predominantly cream colored brick. It has a large sign on the roof which features the organization's name and the current rate of interest paid on savings deposits. At the time this S & L was studied, numerous banners were draped from the roof to create a carnival atmosphere; the S & L was sponsoring a community fair. The main entrance is of stainless steel and glass. On the glass doors are decals indicating that deposits are insured. We can now derive general inferences from observation of the structure--efficiency, prudence in spending, and newness. S & L-I wishes to convey to its customers that it is a stable organization and that funds deposited with it are secure.

In contrast, S & L-II is housed in a large, octagonal, three-story building constructed of pink plaster trimmed with brick. It displays a New Orleans motif with its white, wrought-iron trim on the balconies. The name of this S & L appears in gold script on one side of the building. There are no signs on the roof, and nowhere on the outside is the prevailing rate of interest advertised. The entrance is a double door of wood and glass; it resembles entrance doors found in expensive homes. Near the entrance a brass plaque is mounted which contains the names of the members of the board of directors. As compared with S & L-I, S & L-II is housed in a more ostentatious building, one which gives the impression of being conservative, expensive, and dignified.

In relating buildings to neighborhoods we see some reinforcement of the tentative inferences arrived at previously: S & L-I apparently is located in a middle-class neighborhood and has designed its facilities to

fit the values of that neighborhood. Moreover, its public relations policy appears to appeal to middle-class values. S & L-II, on the other hand, appears to cater to a more conservative, upper-class clientele. This is reflected in location as well as in the design and decoration of the building.

The above is cursory; it merely illustrates the approach being suggested here. The actual study of an organization is beyond the scope of this paper. However, a few comments on methodology may serve to summarize and clarify this approach.

The Concept of "Strategic" Factors

To order or make sense of observed data it is helpful to focus upon "strategic" factors. Such factors are strategic because they are important causal forces in a given formal organization. However, it must always be remembered that each "strategic" factor is enmeshed in all the other factors comprising the organization--it does not occur in isolation. Thus the impact of any one such factor will vary with the setting in which it is encountered. The concept of strategic factors involves a sense of relativity. With this reservation in mind we can list six general categories of strategic factors, and within these categories we can delineate more specific aspects.

1. Broad geographical factors in the general environment:

   Climate as it relates to shelter--weather, seasons, precipitation, etc.

   Climatology--the relation between human behavior and climate, e.g., changes in relative humidity, heat, barometric pressure, etc.

   Transportation systems--rivers, roads, etc.

   Government--zoning rules, tax rates, etc.

   Cultural geography--religion, language (cultural linguistics), etc.

   Economic geography--raw materials, trading areas, etc.

2. Specific geographical factors of site locations:

   Labor supply

   Customers

   Competition

   Traffic flow

3. Philosophical factors of ethics and values:

   Values represented by the organization

   Products and/or services involved

   Appeals to customers and employees--formal images

   Belief systems of personnel

4. Technological factors:

   Available tools and techniques

   Size, number of persons involved

   Special skills required of personnel

   Formal organization

   Job design and work flow

   Design of buildings

5. Social and psychological factors:

   Personnel

   Interaction patterns and patterns of association

   Leadership--formal and informal

   Status systems

   Cliques, in groups and alliances

   Small groups

6. Economic factors:

Sources of capital

Relationship of sunk (i.e., fixed) costs to variable costs

Raw material markets

Characteristics of markets for services or product manufactured

Response to stimuli in each strategic category involves: first, noting or recognizing what is observed; second, relating each item of data to the other items that are observed in a specific setting; and third, relating each item to what is known about the impact or significance of that item. Thus in our example both S & L-I and S & L-II had art exhibits. In responding to the art exhibits the observer would pose to himself questions such as, "Why an art exhibit?" "What does it achieve or convey?" Answers to these questions would be discovered in observing the broader environment. However, they would involve recognition of "Who are the artists?" "What is the motif in which their art is displayed?"

In S & L-I the art exhibit is sponsored by the Los Angeles Park System and consists of paintings by senior citizens. The motif surrounding the exhibit is plain, perhaps just a level above what one would expect when paintings by high school seniors are shown. The message that comes to the customer of S & L-I will vary with his background, but to many it is, "We support our park system and senior citizens." To the more critical observer, however, deeper insights are revealed, e.g., the art exhibit costs the organization little or nothing and thus reflects the motif of frugality, "We don't waste money."

In S & L-II the art exhibit is announced on the main floor by a professionally designed poster: "Selections from the 'Memorial Collection' of the Laguna Beach Art Association. Now being displayed in the third floor Loggia." The critical observer would respond to this announcement quite differently than to the roughly painted sign in S & L-I. In fact, the word Loggia would probably not be understood by many customers of S & L-I. A certain message is conveyed by the use of the Italian word for balcony or mezzanine. In short, the language used in the sign conveys several messages; one of them, arising from decor and choice of words, is that S & L-II is a sophisticated organization catering to an upper socio-economic class of clientele.

The above presentation illustrates an important aspect of the methodology used in this kind of analysis. Not only must the observer be exceptionally keen-minded in recognizing what he sees; he must also be astute as to the significance of each item of data. He must respond to his observations in terms of their symbolic meaning in the setting or context in which they are observed. This is extremely difficult, for it involves becoming conscious of many things that we normally respond to at a subconscious level. For example, we usually know the relative status of officers in an organization, we perceive it without detailed analysis at a subconscious level; we respond to observations such as size of office, location and furnishings, parking places for cars, clothes worn, etc. All of these perceptions communicate the relative status of executives. Yet we seldom consciously reflect and analyze to determine this--instead we "feel" it or "intuitively know" who outranks whom.

Thus our methodology involves becoming alert to the numerous ways in which concepts are communicated. The spoken word is probably predominant as a means of communication. However, conversation is frequently used to hide rather than reveal facts; it is often a means of easing social tensions rather than communicating understanding. Communication in the sense of understanding involves responses to the symbolic meaning of all kinds of stimuli. It involves "sensitivity" to the use of objects such as clothes and furniture; the use of action such as running, walking, gesturing; the use of time such as delays and schedules; the use of space such as positioning of items and layout; and the use of color. Moreover, the significance of any stimuli has to be considered relative to the data in the entire setting.

In the final analysis, the nature of an organization or community is perceived when specific items observed in context are consciously or subconsciously related to the ongoing pattern of events and happening in that general context.